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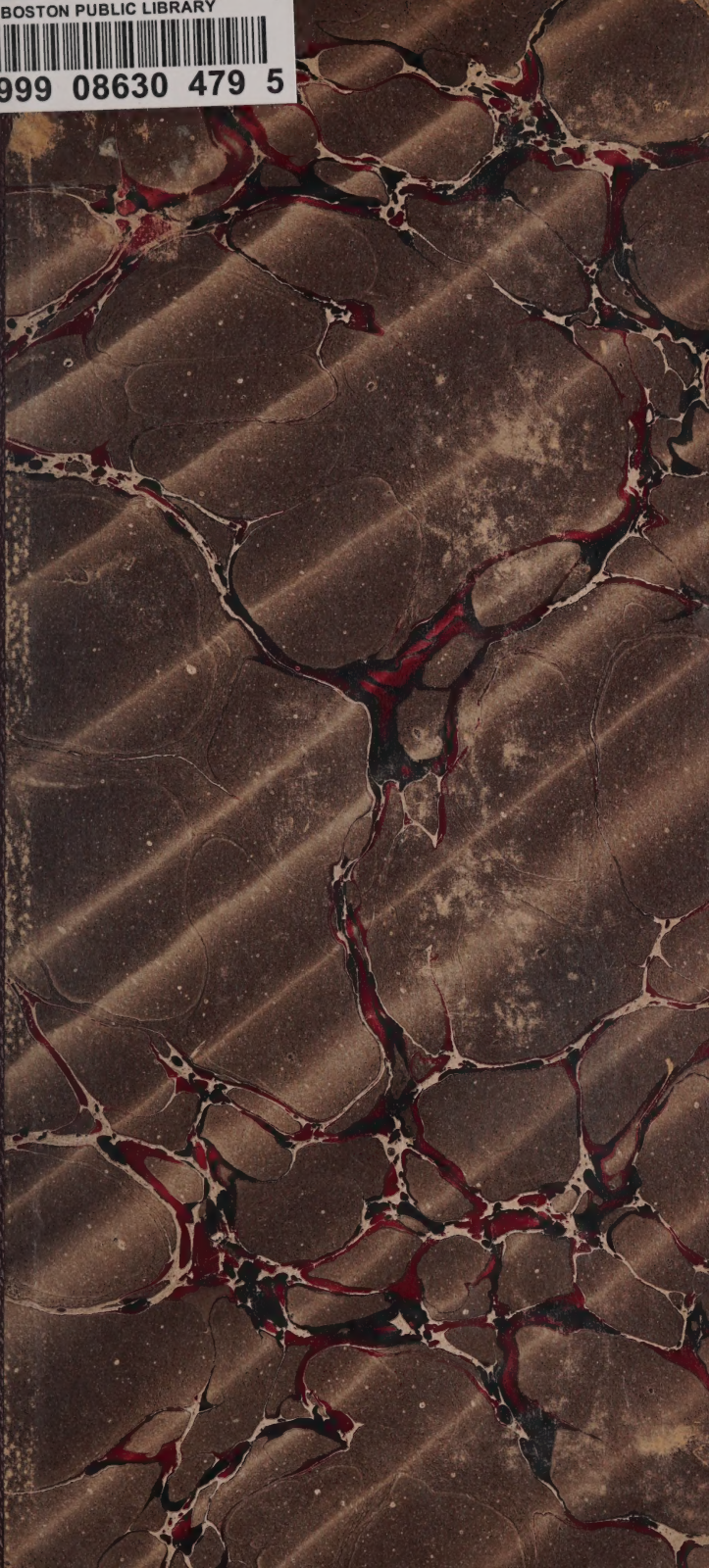

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God's Works Remembered.

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A

VALEDICTORY

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN THE

ANCIENT CHURCH,

OF THE

FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY,

In Boston, June 24, 1838;

BEING THE

LAST SABBATH PREVIOUS TO TAKING IT DOWN.

By SEBASTIAN STREETER, Pastor.

Published by request of the Committee.

BOSTON:

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DISCOURSE.

PSALM lxxvii. 11:

'I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old.'

But why should God's works, and his wonders of old, be remembered? Plainly because they are the expressions of his goodness. They are so in all their departments, and throughout all their ramifications.

This has been their character from everlasting, and will be in all future time, and through the interminable ages of eternity. The time has never been, when any of the Divine works, even the most wonderful of them, were the results of malevolence; nor can such a time ever come.

How replete with encouragement and comfort is such an assurance! And how obvious are the grounds upon which it rests! When once clearly apprehended, they admit of no doubt. They awaken in the soul 'the full assurance of hope,' and 'of faith.'

'God is love;' underived, unmixed, unbounded, immutable, and never-ending love. 'Love worketh no ill;' and love is goodness. In all instances, therefore, the works of God must be the works of goodness, and his wonders, the wonders of goodness.

Adam Clarke says: 'Many attempts have been made to define the term God: as to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-Saxon, and among our ancestors sig-

nified not only the Divine Being, but also good; as in their apprehension, it appears, that God and good were correlative terms; and when they thought or spoke of him, they were ever led, from the word itself, to consider him as the Good Being, a fountain of benevolence and beneficence towards his creatures.'

This is one of the best descriptions of the Supreme Being with which I have ever met. It cannot be misunderstood; nor can its correctness be questioned. God is the great good of the universe, the same in essence as pure, ever-enduring goodness itself. God and good, therefore, must be strictly correlative terms. Taken separately or together, they signify but a single principle. The former always identifies the latter.

Hence the works of the Lord, even his wonders of old, are nothing more nor less than the natural results of beneficence. They are simply the effects of infinite benignity in a state of action.

This, it seems to me, is the only view of the subject which accords with the dictates of reason; and it is fully supported by the testimony of revelation. The Psalmist expressly declares of God: 'Thou art good and doest good.' Ps. cxix. 4. And again: 'The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.' Ps. cxlv. 9. David also speaks of God's 'wonderful loving kindness.' Ps. xvii. 7.

The New Testament also, abounds in declarations of similar import. The apostle Paul, speaking of the Divine goodness as revealed in the mission and doctrine of Jesus, calls it unsearchable. 'That

I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.' Eph. iii. 8. In his first letter to Timothy, he calls the unsearchable riches of Christ, his exceeding abundant grace. 'The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.' 1 Tim. i. 14.

To express the same sentiment, Peter makes use of the terms abundant mercy. 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' 1 Pet. i. 3.

John declares, in so many words, 'God is love.' 1 John, iv. 16. And the great Teacher himself, who 'spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes,' adds the weight of his testimony to the truth of the doctrine for which I contend. 'There is none good but one, that is God.' Matth. xix. 17. The plain meaning of this declaration is, that no other being is good in the same manner, and to the same extent, that God is. He is essentially, independently, and invariably so. Hence it inevitably follows, that all the doings of God are the expressions of his goodness.

But the works of the Lord, it should be remembered, and his wonders of old, many of them, at least, bear a direct relation to man. They are intimately connected with his condition in the world, and his destiny for eternity. They have, therefore, a legitimate and strong claim upon his attention. They should be gratefully remembered by him. He is criminally reckless of his own peace, and that of his fellow-beings, who forgets them. He exhibits a fearful degree of insensibility, a state of mind and of heart

too morbid and cold to be moved even by the most memorable and disinterested acts of kindness.

The good man will not forget them. David did not. He remembered them habitually and thankfully. They were uppermost in his mind by night and by day, at home and abroad, alone, and when surrounded by the multitude.

Not even the magnificence connected with the high station he filled in life, the gorgeous trappings, and the blandishments of royalty itself, could drive from his mind a grateful and humbling recollection of his Maker's mercies. These formed a subject too engrossing and powerful to be superseded by any thing, or even by every thing else.

So much in earnest was he in this matter, that he called his very soul to an account, and solemnly charged it not to be unmindful of the benefactions so profusely scattered around him by the hand of the Most High. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' Ps. ciii. 2. Whatever else might slip his recollection, he would have the remembrance of these carefully cherished, as forming the richest and surest source of support and solace amid the reverses of life, and the struggles of death.

Nor did the secret recognition of the Divine favors satisfy this devoted servant of God. He felt an irrepressible desire to give them publicity, to make all around him, and all with whom he might come in contact, deeply and gratefully sensible of them. He 'abundantly uttered the memory of God's great goodness.' Ps. cxlv. 7. Hence his confident appeal to Heaven. 'I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness in

my heart ; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.' Ps. xl. 9, 10.

Here is an example of surpassing excellence, one which recommends itself to every man, and especially to every christian, as worthy of a devout and perpetual imitation. All are the objects of God's paternal care and protection ; the recipients of rich and multiplied mercies from his hand ; and, in all cases, mercies conferred impose corresponding obligations.

Hence every man is solemnly bound to remember, and publicly to acknowledge, the manifold favors of Him from whom 'cometh down every good, and every perfect gift,' not occasionally, now and then only, and in a heedless and indifferent manner, but constantly, with a deep conviction of their indispensableness and value ; and under the influence of a sincere, vigorous, and ever-enduring gratitude.

It is worthy of remark also, that there are occasions in the providence of God, on which this duty, plain and obvious at all times, exhibits itself in a very clear and strong light ; by which it is impressed upon our feelings with peculiar vividness and power ; special occurrences, which bring home its claims to our consciences and our hearts with an energy absolutely irresistible ; spirit-stirring events, in which a grateful recollection of the Divine supervision and bounty seems to be the presiding divinity within us.

And such an occasion is the present. We have assembled in this ancient house of worship for the last time. We have come to bid it farewell ; to take the last Sabbath-day look at these venerable walls

and devotion-worn seats ; to bend together, for the last time, in humble prayer and praise before this paternal and time-honored altar.

The old and the young, the fathers and the sons, the mothers and the daughters, the habitual occupant and the stranger, are here ; but neither the one nor the other shall come here to worship again. The foot of no suppliant will hereafter step reverently over yon long-frequented and worn threshhold.

Before the church bells of another Sabbath shall be heard, these familiar old walls, those antiquated singing seats, from which the anthem and the song have so long, and so devoutly, been lifted to the throne on high ; this whole venerated structure ; this cradle of Universalism ; this nursery of all that is truly liberal in religion ; this patriarch among the few remaining sanctuaries of olden times in our good city, will have been levelled with the ground upon which it now stands.

Scarcely one stone or timber of it will lie upon another. The rude hand of the speculator will have been laid upon it, and crumbled it from our sight. Its massy materials, so long devoted to sacred uses, to the advancement of the holiest of causes, that of christian truth and duty, of human happiness and hope, will have been appropriated to other, and very different purposes, those of worldly traffic and gain.

And is there not something peculiarly solemn and moving in this thought ? There is. It is full of inspiration ; of sublimity ; of the very poetry of a pure and soul-subduing veneration. What a power does it possess to wake up, and call into action, the more kindly and reverential sympathies of the heart ? What

evidence do the demolition and disposal of this time-hallowed edifice furnish of the mutable and momentary character of the works of art, of the most sacred and permanent of human creations; and, indeed, of all sublunary productions and enterprises?

It has stood here and defied the storms and the waste of ages. It has triumphed over the corrosions of almost an entire century. The churches cotemporary with its infancy, and others of a much later date, have, one by one, crumbled away, till nearly all have disappeared; but amid this fall of sanctuaries, this general sweeping away of the older temples of our city, this venerable edifice has firmly maintained its stand.

The dwellings; the work-shops; the counting rooms; and, with very few exceptions, the buildings of every description, which belonged to its erectors and early occupants, have long since been laid in ruins; but while this havoc by the tooth of time, and the hand of enterprise, has been going on, this house of our God, reared by the fathers; this sacred monument of other days; this link in the chain of objects which connect the present with olden times, has continued to stand, unmoved and unmolested.

The busy throngs which filled our streets, when its corner stone was laid, and multitudes who came after them, have finished their courses, and gone to their long home. Probably not an individual remains among us, who was in the land of the living at that time. All have been swept away by the common destroyer. But not so with this house. It has survived this wide waste of existence, and from generation to generation proudly stood in its ancient position.

And here it still stands in its age, and in its sacredness. But it will stand here no longer. To-morrow, and its moss-covered roof will be torn off; its stately pillars thrown down; its deep and trusty foundations uprooted and removed. Some faint recollection of its venerable form, and of the events and transactions connected with it, will be all that remains of it.

And who among us can realize this fact without deep and conflicting emotions? those of regret and of joy? of regret, that this maternal old temple, where we have so long held our solemn assemblies, must be demolished; and of joy, that a new one, better adapted to the improvements and taste of the age in which we live, is to be erected upon the site it occupies?

Can the fathers and the mothers of this society, or even the children of it, do this? Surely not. None of us can do it. Many of the most interesting and hallowed recollections and associations of our lives are intimately connected with this old church.

Here many of us received our first religious impressions; our first heart-felt assurances of pardoning mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord. In this consecrated place, we obtained our first undoubting and rapturous belief in the truth of 'the common salvation,' of that 'salvation which the grace of God,' free and boundless, 'bringeth to all men.'

Here, when all was well with us, when the sun of prosperity shone brightly upon our pathway, how often have we come, with our little ones, in all the buoyancy and joyfulness of grateful hearts, to 'give thanks unto the Lord,' and to 'praise him for his loving-kindness in the midst of his temple.'

Here, too, when the clouds of adversity had thick-

ened to a tempest, and the storm was beating fiercely upon us, and gloom and grief had almost overpowered our fortitude, again and again have we repaired, to 'cast all our cares upon God;' to spread out our sufferings and sorrows before him; to crave his protection and guidance; to hold communion with him; and to derive aid and solace from his presence and pity.

Here also have we brought our infant offspring, and by the impressive rites of religion, given them up to God, solemnly consecrated them to the hopes and the services of the gospel of Jesus, who loved little children, who deigned to 'take them up in his arms and to bless them;' and who declared emphatically, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Matt. xix. 14.

Here, after the consummation of the most tender and interesting of all earthly connections, have we come, full of budding hopes, to rejoice together, and with our friends, in the Lord; 'to kneel down before him and worship.'

Here, moreover, have we sat from week to week, as years, one after another, rolled onward, to hear the scriptures expounded; to listen to the preaching of that gospel which has 'brought to light life and immortality' for ourselves and our race.

Here all our duties, as men and as christians, have, almost times without number, been solemnly and affectionately urged upon our attention; the temptations and dangers with which we were surrounded plainly pointed out to us; and all necessary warnings, and encouragements to faithfulness, set home upon our hearts. And here, as month after month has come round, we have gathered around the communion ta-

ble of our adorable Master, and reverently partaken of the simple, yet hallowing symbols of his precious body and blood, prescribed by himself. In a word, almost everything, whether pleasurable or painful, which has befallen us in the progress of life thus far, has in some way been connected with this sacred place. Can we then, take our final leave of it without deep and painful emotions? The thing is impossible. It is chiefly, however, on account of the intimate connection of this ancient temple with our religious interests and hopes, and those of the order to which we belong, that we feel for it a peculiar, and very strong attachment and respect, a sort of filial veneration. From various circumstances, principally, perhaps, from its age, and favorable location, it has proved to be the parent church of our denomination in this vicinity, and throughout New England. The society which has worshiped in it, since it came into the hands of Universalists, has probably sent forth a greater number of faithful ministers, and of thrifty and flourishing societies, than any other in our whole connection. To use the language of an apostle, It 'is the mother of us all.' Her children are settled around her in all directions; and she will ever be remembered by them with profound respect. They will all gather about her, in spirit at least, and, with her, shed a tear of sorrow over the tomb of the loved old house, where she nourished and brought them up.

But on the present occasion, some notice of the origin and history of this church will undoubtedly be expected. A very brief and imperfect sketch, however, is all which my limits will allow me to give.

Let it suffice then to remark, that the ancient tem-

ple in which we are assembled, had its origin in some troubles which sprang up among the members of the 'Old North,' so called, in 1741. Samuel Mather, afterwards honored with a doctorate, a son of the celebrated Cotton Mather, was at this time associate pastor of that church, and some of his hearers had become dissatisfied with his public services. Among other things, it was alleged, that he was not sufficiently explicit upon certain controverted points of doctrine, which were deemed by the disaffected of essential importance. He, therefore, asked, and by the aid of a council, finally obtained a dismission from his pastoral charge over that people. A division also took place in the church. Thirty of the brethren, and shortly after sixty-three of the sisters, who still adhered to Mr. Mather, obtained a dismission, and built for him this house, which was probably completed in the spring or summer of 1742, just ninety-six years ago.

It was then, however, but little over half its present dimensions, and for a long time went by the name of 'Mather's Church.' In June 1785, the pulpit became vacant by the death of Dr. Mather, who is said to have been a very learned, zealous, and devoted divine. His congregation, however, had dwindled away to a mere handful; and the few who were left were under the necessity of selling their house of worship to meet the demands against them by the heirs of their late pastor.

A small congregation of Universalists had previously been gathered, principally by the labors of the late venerated John Murray, and those of Adam Streeter; and on the 29th of Dec. 1785, Messrs. Ship-

pie Townsend, James Prentis, Jonathan Stoddard, John Page, and Josiah Snelling, purchased this church in behalf of their infant society, which was already in the occupancy of it.

And do we not perceive the works of God in the foregoing events? Some of his wonders of old, which ought this day to be thankfully remembered? By a remarkable train of circumstances, he caused the enemies of Universalism to erect a church, and in due time to put the friends of this despised and persecuted doctrine in the lawful and peaceable possession of it, as a place of its future and stated dissemination. Thus wonderfully did our Maker 'take the wise in their own craftiness,' and bring good to our cause out of the very evils which occurred in the ranks of its opposers.

Since the purchase of this house by the Universalists, it has undergone a number of very considerable alterations and improvements. In the summer of 1792, it was enlarged to its present dimensions, and otherwise quite thoroughly repaired.

In 1806, new pews were erected in the southwest gallery, those on the lower floor altered and 'painted all of one color.' The body of the house, also, without and within, was painted and put in a state of general repair. During these improvements, the society worshiped in Faneuil Hall. In the early part of 1824 also, some very material alterations and repairs were made in the interior of the house, adding very much to its beauty and convenience. At this time, the rich and elegant chandelier now before us, was purchased, and hung in its place.

The last alterations of any considerable conse-

quence were made in the summer of 1828. The old porch on Hanover street was removed ; a new one constructed inside the house ; new stair-ways made into the galleries, and several very useful and ornamental changes effected in the position of the singing seats. The lower floor has since been carpeted.

These were among the noblest improvements ever made upon this ancient temple of worship, and gave the finish to the venerable aspect which it now wears, both without and within. Since its possession by this society, there have been four settled ministries in this church. The late Rev. John Murray, the ever-lamented father of Universalism in this country, was the first pastor. He was installed Oct. 24, 1793. No clergyman officiated on the occasion. The solemnities were performed by Deacon Oliver W. Lane; and as the history of the transaction informs us, in a very appropriate and affecting manner. Mr. Murray's pastoral relation continued till his death, which occurred on the 3d of Sept. 1815 ; and never, probably, was a minister held in higher estimation, nor more generally and cordially beloved by his people, than this eminent servant of the Most High God.

The Rev. Edward Mitchell, late of New York, was installed as junior pastor of this society, Sept. 12th, 1810, and dissolved his connection with it on the 6th of Oct. 1811.

On the 19th of August, 1813, the Rev. Paul Dean was installed into the same office, and continued his labors till April 6th, 1823, when the relation was broken up at his own request. The installation of the present pastor took place on the 13th of May, 1824. Hence it appears that the duration of Mr.

Murray's ministry, as the pastor of this society, was twenty-two years; that of Mr. Mitchell one year; Mr. Dean's nine years and a half; and my own has already been fourteen years.

Such, my brethren, is a very brief sketch of the origin and history of our society, and of the venerated old house which, after this day, we are to occupy no more forever; and in justice to the memories of the departed, and also to the virtues of the living, it ought here to be distinctly remarked, that, from the commencement of the society to the present moment, a period of fifty-three years, a spirit of very general harmony and cordiality has prevailed among its members.

That the brethren, at all times, and upon all subjects, have seen eye to eye, is not pretended. Such a halcyon age has not as yet made its approach. Some slight interruptions to a perfect unity of sentiments and feelings,—some little family jars, unavoidable in the present state of things, have unquestionably now and then occurred. These, however, have been quite rare, and comparatively of a very trivial character, far more so than usually falls to the lot of a society maintaining a similar position and similar relations.

On the whole, from the beginning of our existence as a religious body, God has dealt very bountifully with us. His merciful kindness toward us has been great. He has enabled us, in a good measure, to be faithful to his own great cause in the world; and to keep the unity of its spirit in the bonds of peace.

Let us now devote a moment to a consideration of the more prominent consequences which have result-

ed from the original transfer of this venerated temple into the hands of our fathers. These have been numerous, palpable, and vastly important to the cause of religion, and of human happiness.

By this very fortunate event, the little band of proscribed and persecuted Universalists in this city, obtained a solid and permanent foothold for themselves, and for the doctrine which they loved and advocated. They had now a house of their own, and the ground upon which it stood was their own. Here they could meet together, and worship their God according to their own honest convictions of his adorable character and purposes; not as strangers, but like children at home. Here they could 'sit under their own vine, and under their own fig tree,' with none 'to molest, or to make them afraid,' and propagate, fully and fearlessly, those high and holy sentiments, which they undoubtingly believed to be the truth of God, and the power of salvation to man. They had, therefore, now obtained a firm stand among the christian denominations of the age. The foundation of a new order of christians in our country, and one destined to a surprisingly rapid growth, was securely laid.

Another consequence of the acquisition of this house by the Universalists was, an obvious increase of respectability to the society, and to the doctrines it held. It gave notoriety to both; and the latter were no longer looked upon as the wild reveries of a handful of reckless innovators, secluded from the world in a school-room, or a garret; but the sober sentiments of an organized christian body, which claimed attention and respect. The public mind was

roused from its slumber. The spirit of inquiry waked up. The work of investigation was commenced anew and in earnest. The attention of many among the more intelligent and wealthy, was turned towards the religious opinions of the new comers into Mather's church. They examined them with care. They compared them with God's word. They became convinced of their truth. They embraced them. They openly professed them. They gave them their cordial support; and their example exerted a powerful influence. It multiplied converts, and each of these drew others with him into the ranks of the Universalists. The fire of persecution was measurably quenched. The violence of opposition to the doctrine of the 'common salvation' gradually gave way before the power of its friends. They argued and lived it down.

Hence a third consequence followed—a wonderful revolution among the established habits of thinking and feeling on the subject of religion. Popular opinions were made to tremble. Old and venerated superstitions were shaken from their deep foundations. The spell of bigotry was broken. The mind claimed it sright to think and to judge for itself. It moved again in its own element. It was free. It was happy. The servility of fear gave place to the inspirations of hope. The slave put off his abjectness, and assumed the port of a child. The dread of infinite wrath was changed for the assurance of interminable mercy. The flames of the popular hell were put out in the apprehensions of growing numbers, and the light of heaven and its glories poured in upon them.

This good work has continued to deepen and widen

in its course till the present moment. An almost entire revolution has already been effected in religious sentiments and feelings, and consequently in the intercourse of the different christian sects with each other. At this day, but few comparatively attach much importance to the barbarous dogma of never-ending misery. Among the mass of the people, the belief of it has become so faint and wavering, as to render it almost harmless; and in producing this auspicious change, this old temple has exerted a very powerful influence.

What multitudes have here found deliverance from the withering torments produced by a belief in the graceless dogma of endless wo? what hosts, obtained the rapturous assurance of interminable blessedness through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus? What floods of tears have here been wiped away? what oceans of anguish, dried up? How vast the number for whom the path of life has been smoothed and made pleasant, and the gate of death lighted up with the smile of hope, and resignation, and peace?

But I must hasten to mention as a fourth consequence of the possession of this house by the Universalists, the general spread of their distinguishing sentiments in this vicinity, and through almost all parts of our country. An unusual number of societies have sprang from it, no less than four in this city; the Second Universalist Society, of which the Rev. H. Ballou is pastor, in 1816; the Central, of which Rev. P. Dean is pastor, in 1822; the Fourth, of which Rev. B. Whittemore is pastor, in 1830; and the Fifth, of which Rev. O. A. Skinner is pastor, in 1836. The society at Charlestown also, that in Rox-

bury, the one in Cambridgeport, another in East Cambridge, and in fact all the others in the vicinity around, have been partly composed of those who once worshiped at this venerable altar.

From this consecrated place, as from a common centre, societies and houses of worship have spread themselves out over our whole land. Instead of two or three, as at the time this edifice came into the hands of our fathers, they have swelled in number to scores, and even hundreds on hundreds.

But as a fifth consequence of the transfer of this house to our predecessors, and it is the last I have time to notice, I shall mention the wonderful increase of genuine christian liberality which has obtained in this community. What a surprising revolution, in this respect, has taken place within the last fifty years. At the beginning of this period, a christian and a bigot were almost synonymous terms; but now, generally speaking, they are terms of directly opposite import. Then, the feelings and conduct of the great mass of the people were bitterly hostile to our sentiments, and to all who espoused them; now, they are friendly. With a few exceptions, Universalists are treated with the same kindness and respect which are exercised towards other sects.

And what has produced this felicitous change? I would not be vain; I would not be unjust; but I must be allowed to think that it has been effected, in a great measure at least, by the influence of the sentiments taught in this house. Other societies, and those of other sects even, have done much, some of them nobly; but this has always stood foremost in the great work. Its office has been that of a pioneer;

and in the hottest battles ever fought against the bigotry of the world, it has appeared in the front ranks. To what a commendable instance of true practical liberality has the resolution to rebuild our church, given rise? Two of our neighbors, the Rev. Mr. Robbins' Society, and the Rev. Dr. Parkman's, by a unanimous vote, have respectively tendered us the use of their churches and vestries, while ours is being built, at all times when they are not occupied by themselves.

The Rev. Mr. Taylor also has kindly made us a similar offer. Surely, 'these are the Lord's doings, and they are marvellous in our eyes.' Such civilities could not have been extended to Universalists fifty years ago, nor even ten. Our fathers were strangers to them. Those who abused them the most, verily thought they did God the best service. But, thanks to Heaven, we have fallen upon better times. We have lived to witness the workings of a genuine christian spirit among those of different creeds. Our neighbors have done a noble deed. They have set before us, and before the world, a bright example, one worthy of all praise, and of all imitation. I would to God it were written in characters of light, and hung up before the eyes of all christendom, to hang there forever.

I had intended to offer a few remarks upon two other topics, the hopes and the obligations suggested by the facts surveyed in this discourse; but my time, and your patience, are exhausted. Suffice it to observe, therefore, that, from the events disclosed by the history of the past, we, as a society, and as a denomination, have abundant reason to indulge very

sanguine and pleasing hopes for the future. The course of our cause hitherto has been steadily, and even rapidly onward. The clouds, which obscured its prospects in its infancy, have disappeared. It has already reached a healthy and vigorous manhood, and is now moving forward under a bright and almost cloudless sky. Let it, for a century to come, progress as it has for half a century past, and the earth will indeed 'be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.' Isa. xi. 9. Yes, the glory of God will have been fully revealed. All flesh will have seen it together. Isa. xl. 5. But, my brethren, in remembering the works of our God, his kind dealings with us, as a society, even from the days of old, let us be careful that we do not forget the numerous and weighty responsibilities which they impose. Let it be constantly borne in mind by every one of us, that our obligations correspond with the number and magnitude of our mercies, with our increased means of doing good, of advancing the great cause of truth and human happiness in the world. What facilities for doing this do we possess, compared with those enjoyed by our fathers when they purchased this house? And shall we not resolve, one and all, that we will as faithfully act up to our means and opportunities, as they did to theirs. Will any one ask to be excused? Will the aged? The influence which their experience and example can exert, is very great. It cannot be dispensed with. Let the old, then, determine to be faithful even unto death. Will any in the vigor of manhood withhold their exertions? Let them reflect upon the impropriety of such a course. For what purpose, my brethren, did God confer upon

you the mature powers you possess ? Was it not that you might advance his cause in the world ? Resolve, then, that you will do it to the utmost of your ability.

Will the young refuse their aid ? They must not. They fill a most important station in life. The hopes of the world rest upon them. They are the sinews and strength of society. Upon them, under God, the very existence of the christian edifice in the world, and of all its attendant blessings, is suspended. The pillars which have hitherto held it up, are growing old, and will shortly crumble and fall ; and if the young step aside, if they refuse to take their places, the noble superstructure itself must sink into ruin. Will not the young of this society, then, on this solemn occasion, renewedly resolve to do their duty ? to live for God, for Christ, for religion ? to devote all their powers and all their influence to the promotion of the great cause of universal holiness and happiness ?

O may the example of the purchasers of this house stimulate every one of us, old and young, male and female, to do our whole duty. They have all, with most of their associates, descended to an honorable grave. Of those who purchased pews at the first sale, three only survive : Samuel Dow, Zachariah Hicks, and Benjamin Russell. Shortly after, however, three others, who are still living, became proprietors, viz. Francis James, John Fillebrown, and Nathaniel Emmes. All the others who first composed this society have been called home ; and who can suppress the solemn reflection, that in a few years, less than the foregoing number will remain of all this dense congregation ? These frail bodies are

but perishable temples. Many of them already bear visible marks of decay. The waster's hand is upon them, and busily at work. A little while, and like this dilapidated old sanctuary, they will be deemed unfit for further use. The Owner will take them down, and apply them to other purposes.

But let us remember also, that, like this falling temple, we shall be rebuilt, and by the hand of the very Architect who fashioned us at first. 'The voice of the archangel and the trump of God' will be heard by the tenants of the tomb, and clothe them in new, more beautiful, and immortalized bodies.

And now, fathers, brethren, and ye children of my Master's house, give heed to the word of exhortation. Before we retire from before this revered altar, let us mutually resolve that we will fill our respective spheres in the world, as faithfully and honorably, as has the paternal temple of which we are about to take our final leave. Like this old house, may all our powers, and every moment of our existence, be devoted to God and to duty. And when death shall lay his icy hand upon our hearts, and the sun begin to grow dim, and the earth, and all we hold dear in it, to recede from our sight, O then let us remember that, 'If our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'